

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FEA-01 ACDA-05 AGR-05 AID-05 CEA-01

CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 CIEP-01 OFA-01 COME-00 DLOS-04

DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-07 EPA-01 ERDA-05 FMC-01 TRSE-00

H-02 INR-07 INT-05 IO-10 JUSE-00 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

NSF-01 OES-03 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-04 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 TAR-01 /118 W

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R 161545Z SEP 75

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5655

INFO CINCLANT

COMICEDEFOR

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AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USEC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L REYKJAVIK 1058

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EFIS PFOR IC UK GW

SUBJECT: FISHING LIMITS ISSUE: PUBLICPOSITIONS HARDEN

REF: REYKJAVIK 1028; REYKJAVIK 1047

1. SUMMARY. IN AFTERMATH OF INTRODUCTORY TALKS WITH BRITISH ON NEW FISHERIES AGREEMENT, ICELANDIC POLITICIANS AND NEWSPAPERS SEEM TO BE COMPETING TO APPEAR AS FOREMOST DEFENDERS OF ICELANDIC INTERESTS. WITH LEFTISTS CHARGING THAT GOVERNMENT CANNOT BE TRUSTED TO DEFEND THOSE INTERESTS, GOI SPOKESMEN ARE HASTENING TO SHOW FIRMNESS. RESULT IS DRIFT IN GOI POLICY WHICH THREATENS TO MAKE ANY TALKS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES LARGELY MEANINGLESS. END
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SUMMARY.

2. IN SPEECHES BY FORMER FISHERIES MINISTER LUDVIK JOSEFSSON AND IN EDITORIALS IN COMMUNIST-LINING THJODVILJINN, CHARGE HAS BEEN STRONGLY HAMMERED THAT BY HAVING MADE COALITION AGREEMENT TO HOLD DISCUSSIONS WITH INTERESTED COUNTRIES RE EXTENSION OF ICELANDIC FISHERIES LIMITS, PRESENT GOI IS "PREPARED TO COMMIT TREASON TO ICELAND'S INTERESTS." WHILE THIS EXTREME VIEW IS NOT LIKELY TO BE GENERALLY ACCEPTED, IT WAS PROBABLY INFLUENTIAL IN FAILURE OF COALITION PARTNERS TO ARRIVE AT ANY NEGOTIATING POSITION PRIOR TO OPENING OF TALKS WITH BRITISH. THIS FAILURE WAS CAUSED IN TURN BY WHAT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN DELIBERATE DECISION BY PROGRESSIVE PARTY NOT TO GO ON RECORD WITH ANYTHING WHICH COULD BE QUOTED AGAINST THEM IN A FUTURE ELECTION CAMPAIGN.

3. THIS SITUATION MEANT THAT IN RECENT DISCUSSIONS, ICELANDERS DID LITTLE MORE THAN LISTEN TO WHAT BRITISH HAD TO SAY AND THEN EXPRESS DISAPPOINTMENT THAT BRITISH HAD NOT CONCEDED EVERYTHING ICELANDERS COULD WANT (A TACTIC NOT UNFAMILIAR TO USG OFFICIALS DEALING WITH GOI IN RECENT YEARS.) AFTER STATING HIS DISAPPOINTMENT, FONMIN AGUSTSSON TOLD PRESS HE HAD STRESSED TO BRITISH THAT IT WAS "OUT OF THE QUESTION TO NEGOTIATE ANY AGREEMENT WITH A SINGLE EEC MEMBER COUNTRY" UNTIL THE AGREED TARIFF REDUCTIONS HAD BEEN IMPLEMENTED. HE SAID THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION OF FISHING INSIDE 50 MILE LIMIT BECAUSE "WE STRICTLY ADHERED TO DISCUSSION OF THE 200 MILE LIMIT AS A WHOLE."

4. PRIMIN HALLGRIMSSON ALSO SPOKE OUT IN HARDER TONES SAYING, "WE WILL NOT NEGOTIATE OR MAKE A NEW AGREEMENT UNLESS THE BRITISH ARE WILLING TO LOOK REALISTICALLY AT THE SITUATION...IF THE BRITISH DID NOT REALIZE BEFORE THAT THERE WOULD BE NO AGREEMENT WITHOUT A CONSIDERABLE CUT-DOWN IN OVERALL CATCH, NUMBERS OF SHIPS, AND IN FISHING AREAS, THEY MUST REALIZE IT NOW. THEY MUST ALSO REALIZE THAT THERE CANNOT BE AN AGREEMENT WITHOUT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TARIFF CONCESSIONS WHICH ARE BEING WITHHELD FROM US. WHEN THE REPRESENTATIVES MEET AGAIN, WE WILL SEE WHETHER THE BRITISH ARE PREPARED TO RECOGNIZE THESE FACTS."

5. THORARINN THORARINSON, TIMINN EDITOR AND ALTHING FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN, TOOK AN EVEN STRONGER LINE IN A TIMINN EDITORIAL SAYING, "WE MAY JUST AS WELL EXPECT A NEW COD WAR AFTER
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NOVEMBER 13. THE BRITISH HAVE MADE IT CLEAR THAT THEY WILL TRY TO CONTINUE FISHING TRUSTING THAT THE ICELANDIC COAST GUARD WILL NOT BE ABLE TO PREVENT IT. THIS MUST NOT INFLUENCE OUR POSITION THAT FOREIGN FISHING MUST DECREASE AND ICELANDIC FISHING INCREASE... THE COAST GUARD WILL HAVE TO PREVENT AS MUCH FOREIGN FISHING AS POSSIBLE INSIDE THE 50 MILE LIMIT. WHILE WE CANNOT PREVENT ALL FOREIGN FISHING, WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO REDUCE IT. TIME WILL BE WITH US. AS THINGS ARE AT PRESENT, WE CAN EXPECT A FIGHT AND WE

CAN EXPECT FOR THE NATION INCREASED ECONOMIC PROBLEMS BUT THE RESULT WILL BE WORTH IT."

6. CONCURRENTLY, ANTI-FRG SENTIMENT IS SHARPLY ESCALATING. IN ILL-ADVISED PRESS INTERVIEW, CAPTAIN OF FRG FISHERIES PROTECTION VESSEL SAID HE WASN'T SPYING ON ANYBODY BUT WAS TAKING HIS ORDERS FROM FRG EMBASSY IN REYKJAVIK. THIS LED TO RATHER RIDICULOUS CHARGE THAT EMBASSY WAS COORDINATING MOVEMENTS OF SHIPS SPYING ON ICELANDIC COAST GUARD VESSELS AND THJODVILJINN DEMANDED EXPULSION OF FRG AMBASSADOR. DENIAL BY THE EMBASSY WAS DISMISSED ON GROUNDS THAT SINCE FRG RECOGNIZES ONLY 12 MILE LIMIT, THEIR VESSELS COULD CARRY OUT SUCH "SPY MISSION" WHILE DENYING THEY WERE DOING IT IN ICELANDIC WATERS. AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND, DECISION WAS MADE (PROBABLY BY AGUSTSSON) NOT TO RECEIVE FRG NEGOTIATING TEAM AS HAD BEEN PLANNED FOR SEPTEMBER 20. INSTEAD, IT WAS ANNOUNCED AGUSTSSON WOULD MEET FRG FONMIN GENSCHER AT UNGA. DEPSEC GEN HELGASON SAID FROM GOI POINT OF VIEW, THERE WAS NOTHING TO DISCUSS WITH GERMANS UNLESS THEY FIRST MADE SIGNIFICANT GESTURE SUCH AS REMOVAL OF LANDING BAN OR WITHDRAWAL OF OBJECTION TO TARIFF CONCESSIONS.

7. DISCUSSIONS WITH BELGIANS TOOK PLACE SEPTEMBER 15 BUT APPARENTLY TOOK SAME PATH AS WITH BRITISH. GOI HAD NO POSITION TO PRESENT AND THEIR REPS DID LITTLE MORE THAN LISTEN TO BELGIAN PRESENTATION. POINT WAS ALSO MADE TO THEM THAT NO AGREEMENTS COULD BE PUT INTO EFFECT WITHOUT EC TARIFF CONCESSIONS.

8. HAD COALITION PARTNERS TAKEN FIRM DECISION REGARDING NEGOTIATIONS AND ACTED ON IT QUICKLY IN JULY, PRESENT SITUATION PROBABLY COULD HAVE BEEN AVOIDED. HOWEVER, STRIDENT NATIONALISM ON PART OF COMMUNISTS, LACK OF EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP FROM INDEPENDENCE PARTY AND DELIBERATE EVASIVENESS FROM PROGRESSIVES HAVE ALL COMBINED TO CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE FROM WHICH IT WILL NOW BE DIFFICULT TO

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